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WARMINSTER URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

A N N U A L R E P O R T

OF

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

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Urban District Offices,

Market Place,

Warminster

July 1948.

To The Chairman & Members of the Council,
Warminster Urban District.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies & Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present my Annual Report for 1947.

Our biggest problem - Housing - was alleviated by the completion of some houses on the new estate at Ferris Mead, and by the conversion of huts at Boreham Camp for domestic use.

The epidemic of Infantile Paralysis did not affect the district seriously, and special measures were taken to try to prevent the spread of this disease None of the cases was fatal.

Your obedient Servant,

D. F. MORGAN

Medical Officer of Health.

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WARMINSTER URBAN DISTRICT

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH FOR THE YEAR 1947

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1. STAFF

Medical Officer of Health : : D.F.Morgan M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.

Surveyor, Engineer & Senior Sanitary Inspector : W.Parks M.I.M.& Cy.E.(Testamur) C.R.S.I., M.S.I.A.

Assistant Surveyor & Sanitary Inspector : : F.J. Reilly M.I.M.& Cy.E., M.R.S.I.

2. STATISTICS (Figures for 1946 shown in brackets)

Area of the Urban District	5,651 acres	(5,651)
Estimated Population	6,522	(6,359)
No. of Inhabited Houses including huts	1,842	(1,800)
Rateable Value at 1/4/47	£51,241	(£50,895)
Product of 1d. Rate Estimated 1947/8	£212	(£203)

The main industries are farming, glove making, engineerings works, silk factory, sawmills, paintworks and milk factory.

3. VITAL STATISTICS

Live Births Registered 86 Male 76 Female Total 162 (140)
of which 11 were illegitimate.
Birth Rate per 1000 population 24.8
Birth Rate for England & Wales 20.5

Previous years - Birth Rates

	1942	1943	1944	1945	1946	1947
Warminster U.D.	17.0	17.6	21.4	18.4	22.0	24.8
England & Wales	15.8	16.5	17.6	16.1	19.1	20.5

Stillbirths Registered 3 Male 2 Female Total 5 (7)
of which 0 were illegitimate.

Deaths of Infants under 1 year 1 Male 4 Female Total 5 (4)

Infant Mortality Rate 31 per 1000 live births (28.6)

Infant Mortality Rate
Eng. & Wales 41 per 1000 live births (43)

Deaths 37 Male 43 Female Total 80 (73)
Death Rate for the U.D. 12.3 per 1000 population (11.5)
Death Rate for Eng. & Wales 12.0 per 1000 population (11.5)

4. CAUSES OF DEATH

	Male	Female	Total
1. Typhoid & Paratyphoid Fevers	0	0	0
2. Cerebro-spinal Fever	0	0	0
3. Scarlet Fever	0	0	0
4. Whooping Cough	0	0	0
5. Diphtheria	0	0	0
6. Tuberculosis of Respiratory System	2	0	2
7. Other forms of Tuberculosis	1	0	1
8. Syphylitic Disease	0	0	0
9. Influenza	0	0	0
10. Measles	0	0	0
11. Acute Poliomyelitis and Polio encephalitis	0	0	0
12. Acute Infantile Encephalitis	0	0	0
13. Cancer of Buccal Cavity and Oesophagus (M) Uterus (F)	0	1	1
14. Cancer of Stomach & Duodenum	2	0	2
15. Cancer of Breast	0	2	2
16. Cancer all other sites	4	4	8
17. Diabetes	0	1	1
18. Intracranial Vascular Lesions	7	7	14
19. Heart Disease	11	11	22
20. Other diseases of Circulatory System	3	2	5
21. Bronchitis	1	0	1
22. Pneumonia	2	4	6
23. Other respiratory Disease	0	1	1
24. Ulcer of Stomach & Duodenum	0	0	0
25. Diarrhoea (under 2 years)	0	1	1
26. Appendicitis	0	1	1
27. Other Digestive Disease	0	0	0
28. Nephritis	1	2	3
29. Puerperal and post abortion Sepsis	0	0	0
30. Other Maternal Causes	0	0	0
31. Premature Birth	0	0	0
32. Congenital Malformation, Birth Injury, Infantile Disease	1	3	4
33. Suicide	0	0	0
34. Road Traffic Accident	0	0	0
35. Other Violent causes	0	1	1
36. All other causes	2	2	4
Totals	37	43	80

5. NOTIFIABLE INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Three cases of Infantile Paralysis were notified. The first, in July, was probably contracted in a School outside of Wiltshire where there was an outbreak. In the two other cases, no contact could be traced with known notified cases both in or outside of the District. Recovery in all was complete.

Special measures taken to prevent the spread of the disease included chlorination of the water in the Public

Bath, more frequent changing of the water, surveillance of contacts of known cases for three weeks after the last date of contact and segregation with close observation of suspects.

All cases were admitted to Trowbridge Isolation Hospital during the period of presumed infectivity, and subsequent orthopaedic treatment where necessary was carried out at Bath.

No cases of Diphtheria were notified during the year.

There was an outbreak of Measles in July but no schools were closed.

Table of Diseases Notified

	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Total
Scarlet Fever	1	2											3
Measles				1	5	10	85	14				1	116
Erysipelas			1										1
Whooping Cough						1							1
Acute Polio Encephalitis							1		1				2
Acute Polio Myelitis									1				1
Opthalmia Neonatorum												1	1
													125

All cases of Infectious Diseases are admitted to Trowbridge Isolation Hospital, which adequately serves the needs of the District. Shortage of staff at the Hospital was acutely felt during the year.

6. DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION

The regular clinics commenced in 1946 continued to give good results. These clinics are held on the FOURTH FRIDAY of EVERY MONTH at Warminster TOWN HALL at 2.30.p.m. Accommodation is let to the County Council free of charge.

At 31st. December 1947, the Immunisation position of children in Warminster Urban District was as follows:- (Figures for 1946 in brackets)

	1-4 yrs.	5-14 yrs.
Estimated Mid Year Population	590 (534)	900 (842)
No.of children Immunised at any time up to 31.12.47.	220 (216)	755 (820)
No.of children who completed a course during 1947	72 (129)	8 (31)
No. of children receiving reinforcement doses		150 (68)
Percentage of Population Immunised at 31.12.47.	37% (40%)	84% (97%)

As Diphtheria shows its worst effects in children before school age, it is of the utmost importance that a high percentage of the 1-4 age group should be protected. The fall in the degree of immunity - varying considerably from person to person - and the increase of contact at school make it advisable to increase the immunity by a "Booster" injection when the school life begins.

7. TUBERCULOSIS

The County Council Scheme continued to function but the great shortage of nursing and domestic staffs was keenly felt in the Sanatoria.

The long waiting period which resulted, caused great hardship to both patients and their families.

New Cases notified in 1947 (including transfers in)

Pulmonary		Non Pulmonary	
Male	Female	Male	Female
5	5	0	1

Of these 1 male and 4 females were transfers in from other Districts.

Deaths from Tuberculosis 1947.

Pulmonary		Non Pulmonary	
Male	Female	Male	Female
1	0	0	0

Number of cases on Tuberculosis Register at 31.12.47.

Pulmonary				Non Pulmonary			
Male 9	Female 12	Total	21	Male 8	Female 7	Total	15

8. HOSPITALS

Warminster Hospital has accommodation for about 40 patients and includes some private wards. During the year, shortage of nursing and domestic staff was keenly felt at the Hospital.

Trowbridge Isolation Hospital received all infectious cases from the District. Its proximity to Warminster is an advantage greatly appreciated by relatives and patients.

Beckford Lodge the Dorset County Council Orthopaedic Surgical Tuberculosis Hospital is sometimes used for Wiltshire patients by arrangement between the County Councils.

Warminster Isolation Hospital continued in use during the greater part of the year as a Children's Home for the County Council. It was latterly closed down and its future use is under discussion.

Maternity Hospital in Warminster After discussion with the County Authority, it was considered impracticable to provide a maternity hospital, home or wing in Warminster. The size of the Urban District does not justify such expenditure at the present time.

9. AMBULANCES

The question of providing an ambulance to replace the former town vehicle was deferred, pending the transfer of this service to the Local Health Authority under the National Health Service Act 1946.

The B.R.C.S. ambulance was used for routine and emergency cases. Calls for this vehicle are made through the Police Station, and it is noted that the Staff give their services free, and are often on B.R.C.S. duty outside the District.

10. CLINICS

The following County Council Clinics serve the District:-

(a) Antenatal - at the Maternity Hospitals concerned. Consultant Clinics are at Trowbridge for patients referred by their own doctor or midwife.

(b) Infant Welfare - on the first and third Fridays of each month at 2.30.p.m. Warminster Town Hall. Attendance is free and voluntary.

(c) Orthopaedic - at Salisbury, Trowbridge and Devizes by invitation.

(d) Ear, Nose & Throat - by invitation.

(e) Tuberculosis - Trowbridge, every Wednesday at 10.a.m.
Salisbury, every Tuesday at 10.a.m.
(Children 2.0.p.m.) By invitation.

(f) Venereal Diseases -

	Men	Women
R.U.H. Bath	Friday 5.0.p.m. Sat. 5.0.p.m.	Tuesday 5.0.p.m. Friday 2.30.p.m.
Salisbury Infirmary	Tues. 11.30.a.m. Friday 6.0.p.m.	Wed. 6.0.p.m. Sat. 11.30.a.m.
Trowbridge, The Halve	Thurs. 5.0.p.m.	Tues. 5.0.p.m.

(g) Diphtheria Immunisation - Warminster Town Hall Fourth Fridays at 2.30.p.m. and at and at schools in the District and surrounding villages when specially arranged.

Laboratory Service Under the National Health Service Act 1946, the Emergency Public Health Laboratory Service is to continue permanently, and facilities for the diagnosis, control and prevention of Infectious Diseases are free of charge to the Council. The Laboratory associated with the service for this District is the Salisbury Infirmary Pathological Laboratory.

11. HOUSING

Ferris Mead. The completion of 38 of the Council Houses on this site, out of a total of 44 was accomplished. Tenancies commenced from August onwards. The maximum use is made of the accommodation provided.

New Estates. At the Zonal Conference on Housing held in February, the following programme was given for Warminster:-

Quarter ending	June 1947	20 houses	)	Figures include
" "	Sept. "	2 "	)	houses built
" "	Dec. "	12 "	)	privately.

This programme was reviewed in October.

Other Sites. At East End, Hillwood, Boreham Road and Pound Street sites, layouts were considered and submitted to the Ministry in 3 cases. The question of Airey type houses at Hillwood was considered and this site was purchased in July, the acquisition of others being pushed forward.

Requisitioned Properties. Of the 49 (approx.) premises under Council control, one which became vacant, was considered unfit for further human habitation. Close watch was kept on the other properties, as many are below normal standards. All were occupied during 1947, and 67 families were housed, excluding those in hutted Camps.

Boreham Camp. This camp was abandoned by the War Department in March, and the Council was anxious to take it over at once. It was not until July, however, that progress could be made with the arrangements for domestic use, and by then it was reported that 40 of the huts were occupied by trespassers and 8 more "claimed".

Actual conversion was started in September, and by October 21 huts were completed and 23 in process of adaptation. 72 huts were approved for conversion, and the first tenancies commenced in October. By December 42 had been finished.

The use of this camp has affected very materially the housing position for small families in Warminster. It has been possible to rehouse most of the bad cases of overcrowding and people who lived in very insanitary property. The site is let to the Ministry of Health on a 3 years' lease.

Approval for certain improvements was obtained in the part of Boreham Camp occupied by "Squatters".

Woodcock and Drill Hall Camps. Owing to the bad structural state of these huts (which were occupied by "Squatters"), it was not considered practicable for the Council to take them over.

Demolitions. Demolition was begun of 1 house in respect of which an undertaking had been given in 1936

12. WATER SUPPLY

The main supply was from springs and wells at Crockerton as in previous years - Jersey Hill, Keepers Well and Holy Well. Chlorination of this supply was necessary and the residual chlorine measured in the town pipes varied between 0.05 parts per million (in first quarter) to 0.15 in the third and fourth quarters.

The auxiliary supply from Arn Hill, Westbury Road was used during peak periods of consumption to increase the pressure. This supply is also chlorinated.

Bacteriological reports on the town supply were very satisfactory:-

Date	Source of Sample.	Degree of Pollution.
14.1.47.	Tap in U.D.C.Offices	None whatsoever.
28.1.47.	" " "	" "
11.2.47.	" " "	" "
25.2.47.	" " "	" "
11.3.47.	" " "	" "
25.3.47.	" " "	" "
8.4.47.	" " "	" "
22.4.47.	" " "	" "
6.5.47.	" " "	" "
17.6.47.	" " "	" "
4.7.47.	" " "	Negligible, Non faecal.
21.7.47.	" " "	None whatsoever.
29.7.47.	" " "	" "
12.11.47.	" " "	" "
1. 12.47.	" " "	" "
16.12.47.	" " "	" "
29.12.47.	" " "	" "

Cannimore Supply.

In September, this supply was abandoned and the last of the various properties and the standpipe formerly served by it, were connected up to the town main.

Auxiliary Works, Arn Hill, Westbury Road.

A start was made on the final stage of this source. The work of laying the rising main from the pumping station to the Reservoir site was commenced. The preliminaries to the construction of the new Reservoir were also put in hand.

13. SEWAGE AND SEWERS.

There was no change in the method of sewage disposal - by screening, land irrigation and sludge beds. An analysis of the effluent in July showed it to be fairly clean, but the whole system of disposal, as well as much of the sewerage in the town needs renovation and/or replacement.

An investigation into the Town Sewerage was started with a view to reconstruction. Negotiations were commenced for the purchase of two sites for future Pumping Stations.

14. REFUSE

Semi-controlled tipping was continued on the Gasworks site. The tip was treated by the Rodent Officer to eliminate rats, with very satisfactory results.

A new refuse lorry was delivered in February.

15. RATS AND MICE

The Rodent Officer continued to work in the district, his duties being shared by the Westbury Urban District and the Warminster & Westbury Rural District Councils. He visited the refuse tip, Knackers Yard, business and domestic premises in the District.

16. SANITARY INSPECTIONS

An analysis of the Sanitary Inspections made during the year is attached.

SANITARY INSPECTIONS.

Housing	628
Overcrowding	11
Factories and Workshops	31
Cowsheds and Dairies	42
Ice Cream Manufacture	16
Fried Fish Shops	12
Bakehouses	24
Meat Shops and Stores	26
Offensive Trades	5
Schools	9
Tents, Vans and Sheds	11
Rat Infestation	18
Infectious Diseases	6
Water Supply	76
Sewage Disposal	54
Refuse Collection & Disposal	47
Works in Progress	254
Meat and Other Foods	77
Miscellaneous	98
Total	1445

NOTICES SERVED.

	Informal	Statutory	Total
Public Health Acts.	16	-	16
Housing Acts.	7	-	7
Other Statutes.	15	-	15
	38	-	38
Outstanding Dec. 1946.	5	3	8
	43	3	46
Complied with	32	3	35
Outstanding Dec. 1947.	11	-	11

FOODSTUFFS CONDEMNED AS UNFIT FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION.

Commodity.	Weight Cwt.	st.	Lbs.
Fish.		11.	7.
Bacon.			10.
Sugar.			8.
Fruit.		7.	1.
Cereals.		15.	5
Flour.		4.	7½.
Carcase Meat.		8.	9.
Suet.		1.	2.
Cheese.			6.
Fried Vegetables.		8.	0.
Piccalilli.			¾.
Canned Fish.		3.	10.
" Meat.		8.	2.
" Milk.		10.	1.
C/F	9.	7.	13¼.

	cwt.	st.	lbs.
B/F	9.	7.	13¼.
Canned Vegetables.		12.	8.
" Soup.		4.	6.
" Fruit.	6.	3.	9.
" Jams.		4.	3.
" Fruit Juice & Pulp.		2.	0.
" Pudding.			¾.
	19.	2.	12.

Total weight condemned 19 cwts. 2st. 12 lbs.

Long Term Review.

The Council and its Officers have spent considerable time during the last year or two in consultation with its Engineering and Planning Consultants deliberating the long term requirements of the Main Public Health Services. Water Supply, Sewerage and Sewage Disposal, Refuse Collection and Disposal, have been reviewed in detail in that connection.

In particular, the possibility of redeveloping a portion of the built up area in the centre of the town has been scrutinised, with the object of bringing about optimum improvements in the District on a unified plan.

Although progress must necessarily be slow at the present, we hope that the time will not be long delayed before these improvements start to materialise and the benefits begin to show themselves in a better planned town with more up to date and efficient services.